

AN OATEN PIPE

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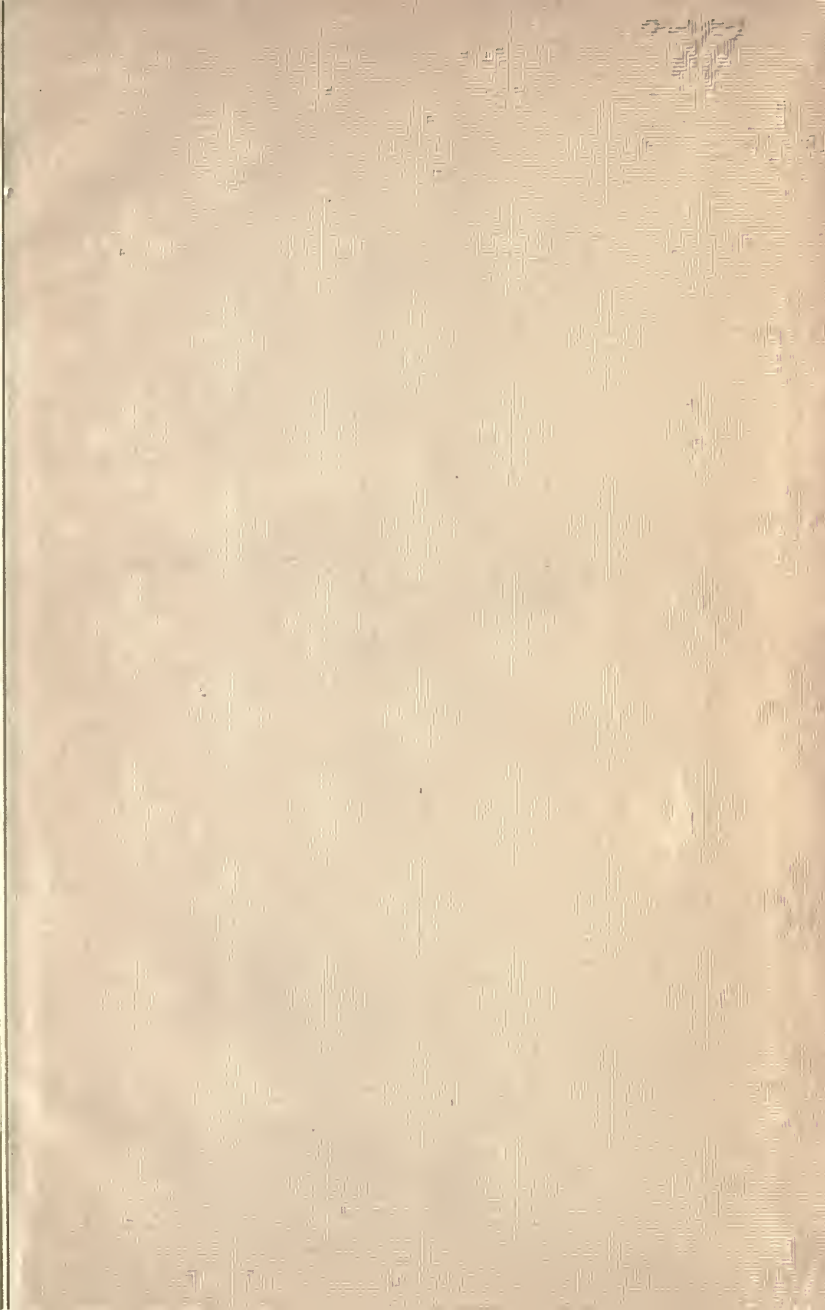


By JAMES B. KENYON

1914



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The Fleur de Lis Poets.

AN OATEN PIPE · ♣

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BY · JAMES · B · KENYON.



NEW YORK. J. SELWIN TAIT
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BY

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And whilst his py-bald curre did sleepe,
And sheepe-hooke lay him by,
On hollow quilles of oten straw
He pyped melody.

Argentile and Curan.

And pyping still he spent the day,
So merry as the popingay.

Dowsabell.

*The Summer's surf against my feet
In leagues of foam-white daisies beat ;
Along the bank-side, where I lay,
Poured down the golden tides of day ;
A vine above me wove its screen
Of leafy shadows cool and green,
While, faintly as a fairy bell,
Upon the murmurous silence fell
The babbling of a slender stream
In the sweet trouble of its dream.
Then as the popped noon did steep
The breathing world in fumes of sleep,
I shaped with fingers drowsed and slow
An oaten pipe whereon to blow.*

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The Reveler.

"O graceful Amaryllis,—regard, I pray you, my heart-grieving pain. I would I could become your buzzing bee, and so enter into your cave, penetrating the ivy and the ferns, with which you are covered in."—Theocritus, "Idyl III."

HE shrilled his fife and woke my dream ;
I heard his music clear and thin ;
And then I found beside the stream
The flower-bell that he reveled in.

The clouds were floating high and white ;
A laggard breeze began to play ;
Along the bank-side poured the light
From out the lavish heart of day.

I knew that where the nectar pressed
Up from the blossom's perfumed cell,
There I should find the tipsy guest,
His pining drowned in hydromel.

An Oaten Pipe.

O wassailer of the summer's prime !

Gone are the goatherds from the plain ;
Across the fields of purple thyme
The yellow sunlight streams in vain.

Drink to thy lover's memory ;

Theocritus is in his grave
Beneath the far Sicilian sky,
And by the murmuring, sun-kissed wave.



An Oaten Pipe.

The Racers.

TIME at my elbow plucks me sore ;
Yet I'll not slack my pace to hear
The one sad word which, o'er and o'er,
He whispers in my ear.

Upon my hair he dusts his rime ;
I shake my head full laughingly,
For howsoever fleet be Time,
He shall not outstrip me.



An Oaten Pipe.

Garden Ghosts.

Two moon-white moths are fluttering
Athwart the haunted gloom ;
I watch them waver, wing to wing,
Past many a spectral bloom.

No footfall wakes these mossy walks ;
The mist's thin streamers trail,
From twisted shrubs and writhen stalks,
Round all the coppice pale.

Low winds amid the leaves complain ;
The firefly's wizard spark
Makes mimic lightning where yon twain
Go wandering down the dark.

And still they flutter side by side,
As night's chill currents flow,
To that lone tryst-place where they died
Long centuries ago.



An Oaten Pipe.

Nocturne.

THE silver shallop of the moon
Is havened in the west ;
The river trolls a ceaseless tune
About her place of rest.

Warm sleep hath sealed her gentle eyes,
And round her, vestal white,
Sweet dreams and wingéd fantasies
Are hovering all the night.

A wandering air, soft as a kiss,
And burdened with perfume,
Steals faint with its own stress of bliss
Into her virgin room.

Be this my wish : bright spirits keep
The current of her dreams,
And ever o'er her liliated sleep
The good stars shed their beams.



An Oaten Pipe.

Absent.

SHE comes not, though I tarry long ;
The house is not the same ;
And every echoing chamber speaks
Her dear familiar name.

She is not here, but many a mute
And fond remembrancer,
Like subtle odors, pure and fine,
Breathe memories of her.



An Oaten Pipe.

The Bridal Morning.

O DEWY splendor of the morn,
Fall lightly on yon vine-wreathed pane;
Thou honey-gatherer, wind thy horn
To tell her day has come again.

The shadows of the night are fled;
The mists are lifted from the lawn;
From peak to peak a shaft is sped
Straight from the kindling heart of dawn.

O morning, on her sealéd eyes
Print the sweet magic of thy kiss;
Breathe softly on her where she lies,
And wake her to the nearing bliss.



An Oaten Pipe.

The Inn.

How quiet is this mossy inn
Where weary travelers lie,
Unheeding how the morns begin,
And how the sunsets die.

Here are no sounds of reveling,
Here is no flaring light ;
Here no fair maids with laughter bring
The tankards foaming bright.

The guests sleep long, the lights are out ;
No bustling landlord calls
His serving-men with cheery shout
Along the echoing halls.

Who come to this still inn abide
Through cycles deep and sweet ;
And while the seasons o'er them glide,
They rest their tired feet.



An Oaten Pipe.

The Dawn of Womanhood.

WHAT ! have my rosebud's petals all
Unsealed their musky treasures ?
My little maid, grown sweet and tall,
Now clasps a woman's pleasures ?
Ah, sure it was but yesterday
I heard her birdlike singing,
And in the fields her childish play
Set frolic echoes ringing.

Now all the glory of her hair
In golden coils is lying
Crown-like above her forehead fair ;
Ah, how I loved it flying
Like amber spray about her throat,
When through the sunny shadows
She fairy-like did lightly float
Across the daisied meadows.

An Oaten Pipe.

Now little loves on velvet wings,
Like bees above a blossom,
Hover with timid flutterings
About her virgin bosom.
Her frock creeps downward to her feet ;
Her dreams grow fondly human ;
Ah, one more kiss as child, my sweet,
Ere I confess you woman.



An Oaten Pipe.

Children of Yesterday.

For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a shadow.—Job viii. 9.

CHIDE not that these poor lips of ours
Smile not with yours that are so fair ;
When falls the frost the fading flowers
Scarce keep their dream of summer air ;
Our hearts are chill, our memories sad,
Our laughter is no longer gay ;
The songs we sing are never glad—
Alas ! we are of yesterday.

The skies that o'er us bend their blue
Gleam not as did the skies of yore ;
The eyes and cheeks of winsome hue,
The beauty that our darlings wore,
We shall not see on earth again.
Our pulses faint, our heads are gray ;
You woo us with your joy in vain—
Alas ! we are of yesterday.

An Oaten Pipe.

The hands that once our own did clasp,
With twining fingers warm and sweet,
Have slipped from out our trembling grasp,
And lie where lie the quiet feet
That in the old bright days did run
To meet ours in love's primrose way ;
Now mists o'ercloud the evening sun—
Alas ! we are of yesterday.

O eyes like midnight stars that glow,
And lips that still like rosebuds ope,
And ye within whose breasts of snow
Still carols clear the bird of hope,
Your freshness, as of morning, keep ;
Gather love's harvest while ye may ;
But we, ah, we no longer reap—
Alas ! we are of yesterday.



An Oaten Pipe.

Hylas and Hercules.

In sooth the boy was holding over the fountain an urn that might contain a copious draught, hastening to plunge it; when they all clung to his hand: for love for the Argive boy had encircled the tender hearts of them all: and he fell sheer into the black water, like as when a ruddy star hath fallen from the sky sheer into the sea. . . . The Nymphs indeed holding on their knees the weeping boy, began to console him with gentle words; whilst the son of Amphytryon, disturbed about the lad, went, with his well-bent bow and arrows after the Scythian fashion, and the club which his right hand ever used to hold. Thrice indeed he shouted Hylas to the full depth of his throat, and thrice, I wot, the boy heard: and a thin voice came from the water; but though very near he seemed to be afar off.—Theocritus, Idyl XIII., translation of J. Banks.

Down the aisle he singing goes
Where the gurgling water flows,
Where the swaying rushes are,
In his arms the brazen jar.
Never yet was boy so fair:
Swallow-wort and maiden-hair,
Parsley-bloom and green couch-grass,
Kiss his white feet as they pass.

An Oaten Pipe.

Now he bends above the tide
Mirror-clear from side to side,
Drops upon his glowing knees,
And his own bright image sees.
O how placid is the pool !
O how sweet the waters cool !
Ah, how good it were to rest
In the fountain's flowing breast,
Nevermore to rise and dip
With the wandering, brine-blanchèd ship.
Hark ! they call him from the strand ;
So he thrusts with eager hand,
Through the water-weeds and fern,
In the wave his bubbling urn.
Lo, before his witchéd eyes
Ivory bosoms flash and rise,
Faces sweeter than a dream
Smile upon him from the stream,
And soft fingers, light as mist,
Twine about his yielding wrist.
Slowly, slowly downward sink,
Lower than the spring's green brink,
To the fountain's pebbly bed,
Wondering eyes and shining head.

An Oaten Pipe.

* * * * *

“Hylas! Hylas!” rings the cry
Through the woodland mournfully,
Ever startling beast and bird,
Though no boyish shout be heard
Answering him whose weary quest
Drives him onward without rest,
Upon and down this alien coast,
Seeking still the loved and lost.
Vain thy search, O hapless one,
Sad son of Amphitryon,
For the lad shall nevermore
Greet thee on a mortal shore.



An Oaten Pipe.

A South Wind.

A ROMPING wind blew from the south,
And woke the dreaming wood ;
It kissed the rose's crimson mouth ;
Rumpled the poppy's hood ;

It crisped the waters of the brook ;
Loosed pine-scents on the air ;
And round her pallid temples shook
The dead girl's silken hair.



The Rover.

OVER, ay over, 'tis over,
Gone with its dew and its bloom,
Gone with the rose and the lover,
Gone with its light and perfume.

Over, ay, summer is over ;
Days for the wooing were brief,
Brief for the bird and the lover,
Brief for the sun and the leaf.

Over, ay over, 'tis over ;
Vanished its laughter and song ;
Summer departs like a rover ;
Ah ! winter shall bide with us long.

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Autumn.

HER's is the mellow booming of the flail,
The flaming bough, the sunset-crimsoned
rill ;
O'er every field her smoky banners trail ;
She sets her ruby sign on every hill.

Her garments, drifting o'er the fallen leaves,
Are freaked with spurted purple of the
vats ;
And as she glides amid the amber sheaves
Her locks flow down in golden cata-
racts.

There melts a honey-murmur on her lips ;
Her throat is tanned, her eyes are sunny-
clear ;
She moves forever in a soft eclipse,
The rustic darling of the doting year.



Chanson du Matin.

MORNING, morning everywhere !
Morning on the misty wood,
Morning on the gleaming flood,
Morning on the drowsy street,
Morning o'er the meadows sweet ;
Skies are fresh and earth is fair ;
Morning, morning everywhere !

Music, music everywhere !
Sad the watches of the night ;
Glad the coming of the light ;
Now a thousand voices wake,
Now a thousand bosoms shake ;
Hope dawns in the eyes of care ;
Music, music everywhere !



An Oaten Pipe.

The Lost Voyage.

OUT of the darkling sunset-sea,
Out of the windy sky,
My ship comes toiling home to me,
Climbing the billows high.

She wearily mounts the dim sea-line,
Treading the foam-wastes down ;
Her breast is blanched with the bitter brine ;
The spume is round her blown.

In alien deeps she has dipt her spars ;
She has swept from strand to strand ;
Her crew have ransacked strange bazaars
In many a sunburnt land.

But well I know, on this evening shore,
My ship brings not to me
The treasure sought,—and nevermore
Shall she put out to sea.



His Own Received Him Not.

No, not the cross on which He hung,
Nor blood that wet each bitter thorn,
Nor cruel scourgings of hate's tongue,
Nor yet the writhing thief's hot scorn—
Not these His cup of woe could crown ;
But that which crushed His heart with
pain
Was, that He came unto His own,
And to them came, alas ! in vain.



An Oaten Pipe.

Come Slowly, Paradise.

O DAWN upon me slowly, Paradise !
Come not too suddenly,
Lest my just-opened, unaccustomed eyes
Smitten with blindness be.

To those who from Time's penury and woe
Rise to thy heights afar,
Down which the floods of glory fall and
flow,
Too great thy splendors are.

So grow upon me slowly ; sweetly break
Across death's silent deep,
Till to thy morning brightness I shall wake
As one from happy sleep.



An Oaten Pipe.

The Human Need.

ALONG the snow-fed rivers of the north
Ne'er waves a flower, or fern, or fronded
palm ;
There every frosty stream, and frozen firth,
Lies locked in white, unchanging, icy
calm.

But where the spice-winds fan the orange
groves,
And trailing vines sway as the waters
sway,
Is heard the sound of many a voice that
loves,
Fluting its song through all the happy
day.

O God, if in Thy heaven, where all is pure,
Peace shall infold us like a polar sea,
Here in this changeful world let me endure,
Where still warm human love can come
to me.

An Oaten Pipe.

A Song of the Wood.

O joy of the life of the wood !
O joy of the swift young blood
 'That throbs in the bough and the bole !
Mount into my shrunken veins,
And brim them as brooks by rains,
 Or as rivers that seaward roll.
Let me feel again what the Spring
To the heart of the wood may bring,
How the April sun and rain
Are shed on no leaf in vain,
And in every clod doth beat
An influence deep and sweet.
Let me stand in the vernal air,
And the bliss of green things share ;
Into the soft dark mold,
That wraps them, fold on fold,
Let the roots of my being go.
Now will I rise and grow,

An Oaten Pipe.

As rapturously, hour by hour,
Grow grass and bud and flower.
No touch of the Spring shall I miss ;
Me too shall the south-wind kiss,
'Till my dwindled, pale desires
Shall kindle with leaping fires.

Here will I lie ;
Above me the domed, diaphanous sky,
Glimpsed through dark-braided boughs.
O delicate-pure are the palmer-like vows
Breathed through the glooms
Where cloistered blooms
Are screened from the fervid day.
Thus will I drift away,
On tides of fine perfumes,
Slow—ah, slow—
As the smooth waves flow,
Out to the dim and mysterious deep,
To the fathomless ocean of sleep.
When Summer's riotous pulses beat,
O wood, thou dost quaff the torrid heat,
As men the sun-cored wine.
Upward each spray of thine

An Oaten Pipe.

Is thrust to catch the sun, as flowers
Hold fragrant cups to catch the showers.
 Blithe are thy sounds that spread
 Through arches dark o'erhead,
 Or 'mid grasses cool and long
 Break into endless song.
 Here in a sylvan dream
 Gurgles a slender stream ;
Listen—ah, listen—how it sings,
Winding downward from its mossy
 springs,
Tinkling like a crystal bell,
As its mimic billows swell,
O'er slant pebbles, through lush weeds,
Or 'mid dense and glistening bredes
Of vines and wood-plants trailing low.
Now where stiller waters flow,
It scarce murmurs under breath
What the bland wind whispereth.
Here furred creatures come to drink ;
Brown birds haunt beside its brink ;
And where fairy bowers hide,
Frolic shadows wheel and glide
O'er the silver-ridgéd sands.

An Oaten Pipe.

There thick ranks of osier wands,
Thrilled by Summer's warm desires,
Shoot their lithe and graceful spires
O'er the tide that purls between ;
All day long they yearn and lean,
Swaying in the shade or sun,
Till the halcyon hours are done.

Woodland noises,
Meadow voices,
Fife of bee and flute of bird,
Wafted hither,
Echoed thither,
Rarer music ne'er was heard.
When the filmy moonbeams sift
Through the leaves that toss and lift,
Wandering lovers sometimes stray
By this hushed, sequestered way,
While the small voice of the rill
Mingles with their dreaming still.

Vanished all !
For now the days begin to fade and fall :
The birds are winging southward ; on the
plain
The pallid light lies cold ; as one in pain

An Oaten Pipe.

The stream moans by, and sad the pewee's
call.

There where the dark wood skirts the
meadow-lands,

Joyless, with tarnished raiment,
stands

One wind-swept golden-rod.

Upon the cumbered sod

The dank leaves lie,

And fitfully

Through naked trees wail Autumn
gusts.

The lichen rusts

On each stark bole, and day by day,

O'er love's forsaken way,

Drear in its solitude,

The gray clouds droop and
brood.

Yet when the snow shall choke the heapéd
dells,

And from the keen north swells

An icy breath,

With threat of famine and frore
death,

An Oaten Pipe.

Then like a gracious prophecy,
Of prosperous seasons yet to be,
Through storm-winds loud and rude
Shall breathe the benediction of the wood.

A Book-Pressed Violet.

Who plucked this faded, scentless thing
From that moist nook wherein it grew,
Kissed by the first mild breath of Spring,
And fed by April sun and dew?

Perchance light fingers touched its meek
Blue petals, as with loving care
It pressed some sick girl's pallid cheek,
Or nestled in her silken hair.

Perchance in language sweet and strange
It spake what words had ne'er expressed—
The gentle love that should not change,
The hopes that budded in the breast.

Where are the hands that placed it here?
Where are the eyes that bent above
This yellowing page with many a tear,
In memory of the old-time love?

An Oaten Pipe.

Perchance far hence, in alien ways,
Her feet may walk because they must ;
Or one by one the circling days
May glide above her sacred dust.

And still the Spring comes as of old,
And still the punctual south-winds blow ;
In perfumed aisles the buds unfold,
And on the wood-banks violets grow.

And still the birds flute in the boughs,
Still fields are green and violets blue ;
And love repeats its world-old vows,
And some are false, and some are true.



The Blessed Isles

(Thousand Islands.)

HERE beneath the violet skies
Dream the isles of Paradise ;
Where the sapphire waters run,
Dimpling in the summer sun,
Countless white-winged shallops dance
O'er the river's broad expanse.
In this lotus-realm of peace
Life's sad mysteries find surcease ;
Here the heart grows calm again,
After tempest, tears and pain,
And the soul's o'erclouded cope
Gleams with rainbow smiles of hope.
Let the frenzied world pass by,
Cheat and wrangle, fight and lie ;
Here across life's turbid tide
Tranquil influences glide
From the drowsy hush that broods
O'er these charmed solitudes.

An Oaten Pipe.

Not Avilion's meadowed calm
Could afford such sovran balm
For the eye distempered, blind,
And the self-sick, jaundiced mind,
As these billowy isles where play
Healing breezes day by day.
Love the shy forgets to wear
His accustomed fillet here,
And his eyes with rapture smile
O'er each leaf-embowered isle ;
He this haunt his own has made,
And within the dappled shade,
When is stilled the oar's light beat,
You may hear his accents sweet,
As again the story old
Into happy ears is told.
O my spirit, long unblest,
Fold thy wings, here take thy rest.



An Oaten Pipe.

To Her Watch.

OH happy watch, to lie in her bosom so,
Counting the hours in that delicious nest,
Hearing her gentle pulses ebb and flow,
Rocked by the motions of her dove-white
breast—

Were I thy jewelled self a little space,
I scarce should heed how Time, the
winged churl, flies ;
And when above me bent her radiant face,
I'd smile into the heaven of her eyes.



Heaven Near.

How very near my heaven lies !

Who seeks may find the place
Within the azure of her eyes,
The radiance of her face.

And of my perfect happiness,

How near the charmed land !
'Tis there where goes her whispering dress,
Where glimmers her white hand.



I Would My Song Were Like a Star.

I WOULD my song were like a star
Hung in the purple depths afar,
To lead her eyes, through gates of even,
Along the kindling paths of heaven.

I would my song were like a rose
From whose sweet heart the perfume flows ;
Then on her bosom it might lie,
And, breathing fragrant music, die



Cupid's Arrows.

PHEBE, wandering in a wood,
 Chanced to spy Dan Cupid sleeping ;
Long the curious maiden stood
 Tiptoe through the branches peeping.
For the youngster's lips she yearned,
 Till, the branches parting slyly,
She to slake her thirst that burned
 Stooped and kissed the rogue's mouth
 shyly.

Now the boy's eyes open wide,
 And upon the maid he gazes,
Grasps an arrow at his side,
 And his silver bow upraises.
Swift the maiden turns to flee ;
 Swift the arrow follows after,
Wounding in its flight a tree ;
 Hark ! how rings the maid's clear laugh-
 ter.

An Oaten Pipe.

Cupid, with sleep-dazzled eyes,
 Stares a moment through the bushes
Where the laughing maid still flies,
 Then adown the wood he rushes.
Now the shaft o'ertakes the quarry,
 Now it cleaves poor Phebe's heart :
Maidens, ere you wake Love, tarry
 First to filch his every dart.



An Oaten Pipe.

The Captive.

WHITHER fare you, Dimple-cheek,
Sad and slow ?

Why that pale and pensive face
As you go ?

In your downcast, wistful eyes
Half concealed a shadow lies ;—
Clouds are in the gusty skies,
Trailing low.

Leaves are fallen, flowers are dead ;
Now the day

Clean forgets the smiles it wore
When 'twas May ;

Why then should your lingering feet
Pass where frost and flower meet ?
Not a bird-song ripples, Sweet,
Down the way.

Ah ! 'twas here the gin was set ;
Here the dart

Pierced thee—here the snare was spread
By love's art.

An Oaten Pipe.

Like a bird that cannot sing,
While it trails a broken wing,—
Bruiséd, fluttering, captive thing,—
Droops your heart.

And it throbs, and will not rest ;
Throbs in vain ;
And you come with aching breast,
Come again
Where love's honeyed words were said,
When the sky was blue o'erhead ; —
Ah, the moments that are fled !
Ah, the pain !

But, O summer's darling, wait ;
What though now
Birds are mute, and madcap winds
Strip each bough ?
Hastes this way the budding year
When, despite each darkling fear,
Hope shall place her chrism, Dear,
On your brow.

An Oaten Pipe.

To a Child.

O LITTLE hands and little feet,
O little heart whose pulses beat
With rhythmic motions, full and sweet !

Soon—ah, how soon !—O tender one,
Shall winter frost and summer sun
Waste thy young life, as seasons run.

Come hither, press thy soft red lips
To mine, before the rude world nips
The blossoms from the fragile slips.

Not far away the city lies
Where all who journey pilgrim-wise
Close in the dusk their tired eyes.

Keep in thy heart the morning song ;
Life's longest journey is not long ;
Sing and fare on, be brave and strong.

An Oaten Pipe.

An Immortelle.

'TWAS here she lay; amid the pillows
white
Glimmered her thin sweet face and violet
eyes;
Sometimes she watched yon moving square
of light,
Or through the window scanned the wist-
ful skies.

Outside the casement tiger-lilies swayed,
And flickering shadows wavered o'er the
sill,
As through the vines the frolic breezes
played,
Bringing faint scents of mignonette and
dill.

An Oaten Pipe.

Sometimes, flashed o'er her rose-pale lips,
would come

A sudden smile when through its circling
bars

Her happy warbler, from its wicker home,
Poured forth its song amid the jasmine
stars.

There are the plants she loved : as gracious
skies

Shed grateful drops upon the thirsty
flowers,

So these knew well her gentle ministries,
For day by day she brought them fresh-
ening showers.

Their leaves are drooping now ; the bird is
dumb ;

Outside the sill no tiger-lilies wave ;

The vines are sere and dead ; the snow is
come,

And round her tomb the winds of winter
rave.

An Oaten Pipe.

But in our hearts perpetual summer
breathes ;

Her presence still like perfume fills the
room ;

For as the buds slip from their velvet
sheathes,

She softly burgeoned into deathless
bloom.



An Oaten Pipe.

Salome.

UPON a salver in her rosy palms
She bears the slaughtered prophet's gory
head ;
Proudly, with placid face and queen-like
tread—
Untroubled by a moment's rising qualms
To vex her maiden bosom's happy calms—
She goes where azure wreathes of per-
fume spread
From smoking censers, and soft lights are
shed
Round halls that throb with tabrets and
with shalms.
Now, smiling, at her guilty mother's feet
She lays her gift. . . . Ay, those stern
lips are mute

An Oaten Pipe.

That erstwhile, all unawed before the seat
Of kings, did dare proclaim sin's loath-
some fruit ;
Yet, hapless woman ! o'er thee doom-clouds
meet,
And fateful lightnings of God's anger
shoot.



An Oaten Pipe.

Arethusa.

AH, now I lay my parchéd lips to thine,
That I may quench my blood's consum-
ing fire ;
Swiftly I kneel where fainting winds sus-
pire,
And odors o'er the earth are spilt like wine,
That I may touch thy cool soft cheek with
mine,
And heal the poignant hurts of my desire.
How have I sought thee, though the weary
waste
Reeled round me, and the dizzy light did
glare
Athwart my darkling sight, and thorns
did tear
My naked feet that stumbled in their haste ;
With what importunate thirst I longed to
taste
Thy fragrant breath, thy kisses sweet and
rare !

An Oaten Pipe.

O murmur to me ! Of thy voice I dreamed
When through my dwindled veins the
maddening drouth
Did surge like fire, and from the pitiless
south
A furnace-blast around me ever streamed ;
Still did I hear thy voice, and still meseemed
To feel the liquid touches of thy mouth.

Upon thy bosom happy shadows fall,
And tender grasses lightly lean to thee ;
Beside thee ever pipes the sylvan bee,
And the hushed flowers hear thy faery call
The conscious reeds weave round thy
margin all
Their slender leaves in emerald broidery.

And now I find thee, and I kneel and lay
My brow to thine, and bathe my anguished
eyes
In the pure depths where infinite sooth-
ing lies
For thy seared lover whom the heat would
slay ;

An Oaten Pipe.

To thee I come and hide me from the day
That hurls its blazing barbs from brazen
skies.

O tresses flowing over crystal sands
That rise and stir, I plunge my face in
thee,
And feel thee ripple down my shoulders
free,
And in thee wind and wind my glowing
hands ;
While from my forehead slip the iron bands
That, ever tightening, wrought new pangs
for me.

Here will I lie, nor ever wander more ;
For me through endless hours thy billowy
breast
Shall lightly heave ; to thine shall still be
pressed
My eager lips for slaking o'er and o'er ;
Here will I lie, upon this easeful shore,
While thou with song dost lull me into
rest.

An Oaten Pipe.

The Cruise.

THE great ship's sails are all unfurled,
Her prow divides the ancient sea ;
Along her cloudy track the world
Sweeps through immensity.

She bears her freight of tears and graves,
Of trampled dust and bloody wreck,
While seamen chant their jolly staves
Upon her rock-ribbed deck.

Day after day a throng of mimes
Leap smiling from her swarming womb,
To play their little part betimes
Ere falls the lampless gloom.

Her weary voyage is never done ;
The winds about her never sleep ;
Forever with the flying sun
She cleaves the shoreless deep.

An Oaten Pipe.

Nameless Graves.

O GRATEFUL heart of the nation, keep
Their memory green forever—
Our laureled dead who softly sleep
By many a winding river,
Where whispering pines and sunny palms,
Above each grass-grown grave,
Recount through bright and prosperous
calms
The great deeds of the brave.

Shall we for whom they freely shed
Their blood, like rain on flowers,
Shall we for whom they nobly bled
Forget these knights of ours?—
Who fought and fell where shot and shell
Ploughed through the lists of death,
And as it were the mouth of hell
Upsent its withering breath!

An Oaten Pipe.

How by the treacherous morass,
Through deadly mists and damp;
How by each wild and savage pass,
O'er glooming fens and swamps;
How ever towards the shifting foe
They pressed with brave endeavor—
While free winds blow and waters flow,
The world shall know forever.

O how they fell! No tongue shall tell
Death's red and plenteous reaping;
On sandy slope, in woody dell,
The countless dead are sleeping,
'Mid silent camps where ne'er again
The trumpet's sudden braying
Shall wake them to war's leaden rain
And battle's iron slaying.

O'er each lone tomb shall summer bloom,
And grasses sway and bend,
And lightly through the fragrant gloom
The evening dews descend:
'Tis well! for there they crept to hide
Their bodies pierced and maimed,
And there, unseen, they bled and died,
Alone, but not ashamed.

An Oaten Pipe.

And there, by night, look down the stars
On many a nameless grave,
Where shadows cast their silver bars,
And misty streamers wave :
Back to her heart doth nature fold
Her own, to keep and bless,
While o'er them tides of sleep are rolled
And sweet forgetfulness.

An Oaten Pipe.

Rosalind's Song.

In the Forest of Arden.

O LET the sweet winds blow,
And let the clear sun shine,
For all the world shall know
That he is mine.

It is not shame to see
The leaf upon the vine ;
Why should it shameful be
To own him mine ?

The light that loves the flower,
I take it for a sign ;—
Love is a maiden's dower,
And he is mine.

Sweet wind, true leaf, fair light,
And joy that shall not tine,
I know love's sovran might,
For he is mine.

An Oaten Pipe.

Morning by Ontario.

THROUGH night's barred gates a venturous
light doth break ;

The shadows vanish, and where far peaks
rise

A splendor burns along the opulent skies ;
The birds are stirring, and the winds awake.

Now burst the meadows into many a flake
Of shifting fire, and still the old surprise

Of morning kindles where a glory lies

Upon the wrinkled bosom of the lake.

As yon proud vessel parts with shining
prow

A backward-curling waste of molten gold,
Down treading the smooth waves, so out-
ward now

A spirit-craft fares 'mid the strange lights
rolled

From other suns, while on my Love's dead
brow

The new day prints its kisses sweet and
cold.

An Oaten Pipe.

An Ocean Burial.

My love lies where the wild waves beat
Above her shell-strewn bed ;
The sands are wrapt about her feet,
The weeds about her head.

The calm stars, wheeling through their
zones,
Are doubled o'er her breast ;
The moving waste forever moans
Round her uncoffined rest.

Slow through the gloom, with dreadful eyes,
Strange monsters o'er her glide ;
On gentle currents fall and rise
The tresses at her side.

She recks not how the loud winds call,
Nor hears the sea-birds scream ;
Sea-shadows round her ever fall,
Sea-lights about her gleam.

An Oaten Pipe.

Naught e'er disturbs her sweet repose ;
No fears her breast alarm ;
The silent waters round her close,
And fold her safe from harm.

An Oaten Pipe.

Sorrow-Blind.

THE world is lovely ; but our eyes are dim
With selfish tears, and through the blind-
ing mist

We cannot see the glorious mountains,
kissed

By the last rays of sunset, nor the slim
And nascent moon above the night's faint
rim,

Nor the young stars that keep their early
tryst.

The world is lovely ; but our pulses beat
To the slow measure of a hopeless pain,
And the dull throbbing of our heart and
brain

Shuts out the vision of the fair and sweet ;
Yea, even the beauty shining at our feet
Shineth for us, the sorrow-blind, in vain.

An Oaten Pipe.

The world is lovely ; oh, when night comes
on,

And long and lonely vigils vex our eyes,
God grant that over all the darkened
skies

The stars of promise may be thickly sown ;
And though we wait, and watch, and weep
alone,

Yet wait as one who knows the dawn
shall rise.

An Oaten Pipe.

A Song of May.

IN the orchard close I see thee,
And along thy luminous way
The shadows arise and flee thee,
O delicate, blossoming May.

The dew on thy sandals glisten,
As, hard by yon shaggy bole,
Thou pausest a moment to listen
To the song of an oriole.

The pink apple-blossoms above thee
Tremble to touch thy hair,
And the sweet south winds that love thee
Are faint with the passion they bear.

O fair is thy face, and tender
The light of thy laughing eyes,
From the deeps of whose azure splendor
Wells ever a glad surprise ;

An Oaten Pipe.

For the ways of thy life are sunny,
Nor dimmed by thy crystalline showers,
And thy footsteps, 'mid perfume and honey,
Are jewelled with radiant flowers.

Not so was the troublous morning
That dawned on thee first, O sweet,
For thy birth-star rose lurid with warning,
And thy birth-song was singing of sleet.

But terrors of storm could not fright thee,
Thou child of the tearful Spring,
Nor frost in its cruelty blight thee,
For thou heardest the orioles sing.

And now the drear days of thy sadness
Are vanished as phantoms afar,
While forth in thy beauty and gladness
Hope beckons thee, chaste as a star.

And thy feet press the odorous grasses
That spring on the uplands and leas,
And before thee the wind, as it passes,
Scatters downward the blooms from the
trees.

QUATRAINS.

Moonlight.

THROUGH night's dim gulfs a silver radiance
falls ;
On dreaming wood and city square it lies ;
It streams along yon attic's naked walls,
To kiss a child's starved face and sight-
less eyes.



Nature.

SHE clothes herself in meek simplicity,
And o'er her lover spreads her hands to
bless,
When lo ! her garments, rustling to her knee.
Flash on his eyes her dazzling loveliness.



An Oaten Pipe.

Art.

No cruel mistress she, with icy brows,
And cold eyes veiled in haughty half-
eclipse,
But a warm maid who hears her lover's
vows,
With gracious smiles upon her tender lips.



On the Cliff.

A BIRD on yonder crag which fronts the
deep
Trilled a full hour his wild love-lay to me ;
So Sappho sang upon the wind-swept steep,
Ere plunging hopeless in the gulping sea.



An Oaten Pipe.

A Prophecy.

No seer am I, and yet I know full well,
When o'er my book thine eyes pore,
misty-dim,
To thine own heart this secret thou shalt
tell :
"This friend loved me, and I—I, too, loved
him."



A Volume of Verse.

THIS is a plant whose slender growth,
Through years of sun and gloom,
Hath yet scarce burst the bud's green
sheath
To show a timid bloom.



An Oaten Pipe.

Carlyle.

A WANDERING cloud upon his haggard face
A shadow cast—he thought it doom's
black pall ;
He saw a transient star shoot from its
place,
And deemed the reeling heavens about to
fall.



A Modern Joust.

THE trumpets of the morning-glories sound
A loud alarum to the brave knights round ;
The joust begins, and proudly on the breeze
With lance in rest come riding down the
bees.



An Oaten Pipe.

Truth.

FROM level brows her eyes look straight
before ;

She falters not to seek what lies beyond ;
Her vesture, travel-stained, is freckled with
gore ;

From her free wrist down coils a broken
bond.



Carpe Diem.

THE beasts that roam the fields when Spring
is green

Know not the morrow, mourn not yester-
day ;

Their joy is now ; we pine for what hath
been,

Blind to our bliss till it hath slipped away.



An Oaten Pipe.

Music.

A SHADE of thought lay on His ageless face,
Till suddenly God said, "Let there be
light,"
When lo ! His smile like sunshine streamed
through space,
And music thrilled adown the gulfs of
night.



A Challenge.

ARISE, O soul, and gird thee up anew,
Though the black camel Death kneel at
thy gate ;
No beggar thou that thou for alms shouldst
sue ;
Be the proud captain still of thine own
fate !



An Oaten Pipe.

The Cure-Alls.

Le temps ou la mort sont nos remedes.—*Rousseau.*

FOR love that blights, for pain that slowly
wastes,
For fears that haunt, for hopes that ever
flee,
For sorrow that abides, for joy that hastes—
Or time or death hath sovran remedy.



Best-Time.

NOR they are blest who greet the morning's
sun,
Nor they on whom the sultry noontide
glows,
But blest are they, life's labors being done,
Whom evening calls unto its dusk repose.



Love and Beauty.

I FOLLOW Love, and Beauty twin to Love,
Beauty so beautiful and Love so sweet ;
They smile and beckon to me where they
move,
Yet e'er elude my clogged and stum-
bling feet.



On the Revival of the Elizabethans.

NEW voices twittering in the ear of Time
Hush the full-throated songs we knew of
yore ;
But morn returns again, as in its prime,
To wake the old sweet minstrelsy once
more.



An Oaten Pipe.

The Miser Year.

THE miser year, amid his songless bowers,
With senile eyes gloats o'er his gathered
gold,
And laughs and mumbles while, in rippling
showers,
It sifts between his fingers thin and old.



A Shooting Star.

A HOMESICK angel, with sad eyes,
Upon some distant sphere,
Adown the dark abysmal skies
Let fall one golden tear.



An Oaten Pipe.

The Bedouins of the Skies.

YON clouds that roam the deserts of the
air,
On wind-swift barbs, o'er many an azure
plain,
Scarce pause to lift to Allah one small
prayer,
Ere Ishmael's spirit drives them forth
again.



An Epitaph.

Here lies a heart, once love's own shrine,
whence rolled
The smoke and flame of unconsumed
desire ;
The flames are perished now, the altar cold,
Yet ev'n its ashes hide a smouldering
fire.



An Oaten Pipe.

The Guest.

O PAIN, and art thou come to be my guest?
Then will I not deny thee; lo, I greet
With smiles thy coming; thy wan face
 is sweet,
And to mine own let thy parched lips be
 pressed
With fond beguilement; on mine aching
 breast
Pillow thine head; and while the hours on
 feet
Of flame run by or haltingly or fleet,
Here shalt thou find thine own compan-
 ioned rest.
Nay, now I know that who accepteth thee,
Howe'er his hands may falter, hath thy
 leave
To loose thy mask and see thee as
 thou art,—
How that thy forehead shines angelically,
And thy deep eyes mysteriously weave
A spell at length to hush the
 anguished heart.

An Oaten Pipe.

Farringford.

(Isle of Wight—October, 1892.)

HE sleeps the sleep that knows no earthly
waking ;
But now for him above eternal hills,
The cloudless dawn of deathless day is
breaking,
And splendor fills
The orbit of his vision glorified.
Not yet the glad surprise
Hath faded from his eyes
Of that first raptured gazing on the slopes
of Paradise.
New is the song he sings ;
His valiant voice outrings
Through all the spaces wide,
Roofed with the lights celestial which o'er-
dome
That bourne where radiant spirits seek their
home.

An Oaten Pipe.

Him doth the vast deep mourn,
And round this isle that knew his wandering
feet

On restless winds is borne
A sigh of lamentation vague and fleet.
The silent ships go by,
To find their haven 'neath an autumn sky,
As conscious that no more
Shall he behold them who of yore
Chanted their conquest over wind and wave.
Ay, he is in his grave,
Where the huge minster's shadowy arches
soar,

And where the mighty city's hollow roar
Rolls down the endless streets.
Him the blithe day greets
No longer in the garden that he knew,
Where bright for him the larkspur grew,
And roses shed their sweets—
Where sounds of morn and even did uprise
In infinite harmonies.
O, yet we do but err
To deem that beauty's worshiper
Forsakes its shrine

An Oaten Pipe.

At summons of the Voice divine ;
For he hath passed into that inner place
Where now he seeth, face to face,
Eternal Beauty as it is.
Him shall the dews not miss,
Nor the brave grass, nor flowers that bud
 and blow,
Nor the cool brooks that flow
By wood and fell-side to the wooing sea :
Henceforth he is a part of them, for he
Shall be resolved into that essence pure
Which ever shall endure
As loveliness in stream, and hill, and tree.
His voice men still shall hear
In whispering leaves, and in the noonday
 choir
Of summer insects, and the dawn-song clear
Where morn plants on the downs her feet
 of fire.
He still shall sing within the rhythmic tides
That ocean rolls above its caverns hoar,
And in the unheard music that e'er slides
Through gulfs of night from many a star-
 sprent shore.

An Oaten Pipe.

His song from countless joyous feathered
throats

Shall bubble at daybreak and at evenfall,
And those far elf-land notes

He loved shall echo in the iterant call
Of black-stoled crickets on the winter
hearth.

By many a norland firth

Where the shrewd blasts whine round the
icy peaks,

By many a desert strand

Where the Pacific ever idly breaks

A tumbled billow round the lonely land,

Where'er is sound or song, there shall be
heard,

Sweet as the memory of love's dying word,

The master's tone in nature's symphony,

Till Time shall furl his wings and cease to
be.



An Oaten Pipe.

Nature's Renewing.

BENEATH the drifted snow she keeps
Her children safe from harm ;
Each folded germ securely sleeps
In silence sweet and warm.

And when the laughing wind shall break
The bonds of Winter's night,
Then from their sleep the flowers shall wake
To seek the pleasant light.

The Spring-time ever comes. O soul !
Though loosed the silver cord,
And shattered is the golden bowl,
And on the trampled sward

The pitcher at the fountain lies
Beside the broken wheel,
O'er thee shall bend the kindly skies,
And balmy breaths unseal

An Oaten Pipe.

Death's frosty silence with a kiss
Light as an angel's wing,
And thou shalt wake 'mid tides of bliss
To hear God's minstrels sing.



An Oaten Pipe.

Laborare est Orare.

YEA, "work is worship," said that hoary
man,

Who o'er the wintry sea, from his frore
height

Of four-score years and six, with ageless
sight

Watched still the bodeful struggle in the
van

Of the world's progress; for he did not
scan

The fray as one who had not tried the
fight,

But as one who had battled for the right,
And freed his own soul from the coward's
ban.

Yea, work is worship, work that's one with
pain;

Work born of consecration and of trust;

An Oaten Pipe.

Work wrought with bruised hand and weary
brain,

Consenting to the meager cup and crust :
Such work is worship ; 'tis not counted
vain ;

God marks His toilers by their sweat and
dust.

An Oaten Pipe.

A Nativity.

HE came when the petals of the rose were
blown

Down the long aisles of windy woodlands,
where

The leaves fell thick as raindrops through
the air,

And half-choked runnels made incessant
moan.

He came, from Paradise but lately flown,

Upon his brow the halo angels wear,

And in his eyes the memory of the fair

Far scenes of blessedness that they had
known.

O miracle of life, continued still,

Though earth's frail generations wend
from sight,

An Oaten Pipe.

And nameless shadows of the darkness fill
The orbs that turn toward the coming
night,
Thine is the pledge that morn again shall
thrill
Our wakened souls with music of the light.

An Oaten Pipe.

Song of the Vaudois Exiles.

O VALLEY as fair as a vision,
O river as bright as a dream,
O fields sweet as meadows Elysian,
O valley, O meadows, O stream,
I leave thee to-day and forever,
Yea, I pass as a tale that is told,
But this flesh from my spirit shall sever
Ere my love for thee fails or grows cold.

O heights that are clothed with the sunlight,
As the hills of our God shine afar,
Henceforth thou shalt stand in but one
light

Shed abroad from a shadowless star ;
For lo ! the clear orb of remembrance
Through sorrow and time shall not wane,
And though tears should obscure thee and
distance,

I shall see thee in memory again.

An Oaten Pipe.

The Specter.

"Be sure your sin will find you out."—*Num.* 32 : 23.

THE night is long, the moon is cold,
The stars faint in the icy sky,
My pulses wane, my heart is old,
And yet I should not dare to die.
Before me ever stands my sin,
A wraith that will not disappear ;
Its outstretched hands are pale and thin,
And through them sifts the moonlight
clear.

Once from this ghost I sought to hide
Where music clashed and lights did
flare,
I turned my eyes, lo ! at my side,
Chill, mist-like, silent, it was there.
Then to the wilderness I fled,
In sackcloth wrapped my bitter shame,
Poured ashes on my stricken head—
O God ! it o'er me stood the same.

An Oaten Pipe.

Then an unquiet bed in hell

At length in sheer despair I made,
But while the shadows round me fell,

Beside me rose a blacker shade ;
Till suddenly the foul eclipse
Refused to clothe my spirit stark,
And while I shrieked with stiffened lips,
From off me rolled the frightened dark.

And now I drift about the world ;

My eyes are emptied of their tears ;
My hopes like chaff are round me whirled ;
And all my soul is scourged with fears.

The moon sinks low, the night is long ;
Beneath a cold and prayerless sky
I stand, watched by my spectral wrong,
Afraid to live, afraid to die.



An Oaten Pipe.

An Hour-Glass.

THE tawny sands slip downward in the
glass

Noiseless and smooth, a pulse whose
even flow

No boisterous winds can vex howe'er
they blow,

A tide across whose breast no shadows
pass.

Lo! yellow bees that drone in summer
grass,

A mill whose mossy wheel has ceased to
go,

A hawk above a woodland sailing slow,

A sunny field reaped by a brown-armed
lass—

All these like visions rise upon my soul,
Till, wholly meshed in Fancy's sorceries,

An Oaten Pipe.

While still the grains sift from the crystal
bowl,

I feel against my brow a phantom
breeze,

And see o'er gleaming sands the long
waves roll,

And hear the washings of the orient
seas.

An Oaten Pipe.

The Advent.

HER footsteps gleam upon the eastern
slopes,
And beds of primrose blush beneath her
tread ;
Her virgin eyes are luminous with hope,
Her dewy locks down ripple from her
head ;
Her feet are bare, her garments smell of
myrrh,
And all the little flowers lean to her.

To greet her coming, lo ! the woods awake
With jubilation, and the pasture-lands,
Where rove the herds, are strewn with
many a flake
Of lambent fire, as by invisible hands ;
Deep unto deep sends forth its jocund
call,
The earth is glad, and God is over all.

Love Gives its All.

Love gives its all nor counts the price,
Happy that thus it still may show
In an unmeasured sacrifice
Its precious overflow.

Where eyes are dimmed with lonely tears,
Where hearts are bowed with grief and
care,
Where weakness walks 'mid gloom and
fears—
Love sheds its healing there.

Love's hands are strong to lift and save ;
Down pain's dark ways Love goes afar ;
Love's beacon shines athwart the grave,
And kindles like a star.

Love scales the height and probes the
deep,
And when death's shadow o'er us lies,
Love's mighty pinions upward sweep
To bear us to the skies.

Her Violin.

I WOULD I were her violin,
To rest beneath her dimpled chin,
To softly kiss her swan-white throat,
And breathe my love through every note.
When o'er my strings her fingers fair
Should lightly wander here and there,
The while her flashing bow did press
My bosom with its swift caress,
Then would I waken into song
The rapture that had slumbered long.
Mine ear against her swelling breast
Should hearken to its sweet unrest,
And—happy spy!—then should I know
How, deep beneath that drifted snow,
A blissful tumult in her heart
Made all her fluttering pulses start.
Then that high calm, that maiden grace,
That meekly proud and peerless face,

An Oaten Pipe.

That aureole of sun-bright hair,
That brow such as the seraphs wear,—
No longer these should baffle quite
The anxious lover's dazzled sight.
Ah, would I were her violin,
That thus her secret I might win.



An Oaten Pipe.

A Colonial Ambuscade.

As townward mistress Betty goes
With tossing head and haughty lips,
And dainty, outward-pointing toes
That spurn the path o'er which she trips,
She recks not how yon sleek young blades
Begin to ogle, smirk and purr,
Nor yet how all the kerchiefed maids
Are whispering after her.

As Betty goes she walks alone,
Her gathered kirtle in her hand ;
She curtsies not to any one,
She sees no smiles, however bland ;
Her bosom, veiled by silken braids,
Is sweet as hills that drop with myrrh,
While still the sly and tittering maids
Stand gazing after her.

An Oaten Pipe.

Ah, Betty goes to meet her fate !
Bold Roger lurks by yonder stile ;
She spies him, but alas ! too late ;
With him avails no scornful wile.
Now all her helpless pride he raids,
And traitor longings in her stir,
While o'er their shoulders men and maids
Make merry after her.

An Oaten Pipe.

A Puzzle.

ALAS ! I am a gray-beard ;
My years are fifty-three ;
I'm old and grave, but Bessie ne'er
Will sit upon my knee.

Yet once this dimpled maiden,
With bird-like sounds of glee
And sweet proprietary airs,
Would perch upon my knee.

And oft we've romped together,
When summer winds blew free,
But evening stars and sleepy eyes
Brought Bessie to my knee.

But now I cannot coax her ;
What can the difference be ?
Her gowns are long, she romps no more,
Nor sits upon my knee.

An Oaten Pipe.

Canticle.

SOFT as the dew that falls by night
Beneath the moon's entranced light,
Upon my thirsty heart love fell ;
Love slakes my drouth, and all is well.

No claustral lily lifteth up
More eagerly her virgin cup,
To quaff the balm-draught from above,
Than I my heart to drink of love.

Now all my days are dream-enwreathed
And perfume on my dark is breathed ;
Joy's buds within my bosom swell ;
Sing, O my heart, for all is well.



An Oaten Pipe.

Tygeia.

O DARKENED eyes above the grass,
O have you seen the maiden pass?
Her smile is like the morn, they say;
Her forehead fairer than the day.

With some who know it not she walks;
By cottage gates she stands and talks;
She flees the palace and the hall,
Nor heeds the golden tongues that call.

She lives with dawn upon the hills;
She loiters by the sliding rills;
Where berries grow, her lips she stains;
Her cheeks are tanned by winds and rains.

From those who seek her, fast she flies,
But not to alien suns or skies;
Oft when afar her lovers roam,
She bides beneath the vines at home.

Few prize the maid, when face to face
They see her lusty, full-blown grace;
O fools and blind, alas! alas!
Say, have you seen the maiden pass?

An Oaten Pipe.

Forgiven.

"Qui sine peccato est vestrum, primus in illam lapidem mittat."

"HATH no one cast a stone at thee?"

"Nay, Lord," she humbly said,
And from the pavement tearfully
She raised her fallen head.

With anxious hands her burning face
She sought to hide; her hair,
A midnight stream, with careless grace
Flowed round her shoulders bare.

"Go thou and sin no more." His eyes
Like heaven above her bent,
And tremulous with awed surprise
She from Him slowly went.



An Oaten Pipe.

The Night-Angel.

For a Picture.

O ANGEL of the dark—through vistas dim,
O'erhung with purple shadows of the night,
Where swarming stars like multitudinous
bees

Hum round the vast and hollow arch of
heaven—

On tireless pinions thou dost ever sweep,
Secure from change. Me time shall surely
bear

To failing limbs, scant breath, and eyes
that peer

Through mists that gather in the evening
fields—

But thou shalt ever spread thy flowing robes,
Spangled with constellations never
quenched,

About thy fresh young form, and evermore
Thine arms outstretched shall sift from
rosy palms

An Oaten Pipe.

The dews that slake a million thirsty
blossoms.

When earth to her warm bosom shall
receive

The mold that once hath wrapt this vital
spark—

As embers hid in ashes on the hearth—

When reels my forehead dustward, thou
shalt be

Fair as that hour when first thy gemmy brow
Took the cool kisses of the twilight breeze,
And all the naked world did welcome thee.
Let me grow old and die—it shall be well ;
Though I forget love's steadfast eyes that
burn

Like planets in their spheres, and love's
sweet lips

Whose music jangling voices cannot vex,
I shall remember in the scented gloom,
Where flowers braid their roots, that thou
dost keep

Thy flight along the highways of the dusk
Forever lovely, and I shall be glad.

An Oaten Pipe.

His Confession.

WHAT boots it to give me your hand?
No thrill do I feel;
True, once it was otherwise—see, o'er the
land
The long shadows steal.

Ay, once a soft pair of dark eyes
Could trouble my rest;
Could wake song or sorrow—behold, the
light dies
From out the dim west.

I loved you; I own it was so;
But all that is dead;
So come, we are lingering late, let us go—
The twilight has fled.



An Oaten Pipe.

Zωοποιέω.

O HEART, lift up a brave song,
For it is good to be ;
We will not sing a grave-song,—
Avaunt, mortality !

Far from us be the wormy mold
Where Sorrow's footsteps fall ;
Far from us be the phantoms cold
That through the darkness call.

Now let us lift a morning lay ;
The sun is in the sky ;
The winds of God about us play ;
An angel rustles by.

And there is dew upon the sward,
And flowers are in the grass,
And lo ! the glory of the Lord
Gleams where his garments pass.



An Oaten Pipe.

A Vanished Face.

STILL as of old the morning breaks ;
The brook delays its mimic flood,
And in its soft embrace it takes
The ivy-mantled wood.

Within the elm the robin sings ;
The lilac blooms beside the bars ;
And through the shadows evening brings
Look down the early stars.

And day by day the cheerful sounds
Arise of those who sow or reap,
Who wake to tread life's common rounds,
And turn again to sleep.

The seasons come and go apace,
And naught is changed mine eyes can
see ;
But in its grave lies one dear face
That was the world to me.

An Oaten Pipe.

A Vesper Prayer.

FROM all its little bells the brook
Shakes out a silver peal,
And faintly from the forest nook
Their elfin echoes steal.
The shadows lengthen on the sward ;
The light dies in the west ;
Now through the dewy twilight, Lord,
Send down the balm of rest.

The glimmering kine upon the grass
Lie couched in dumb content,
And wandering breaths of blossoms pass,
In one rich perfume blent ;
The braided gnats in sweet accord
Wail where the willows weep ;
Now through the solemn night, dear Lord,
Send down the gift of sleep.



An Oaten Pipe.

Seaward.

O LOVE, our brows are toward the open
 sea ;
Our eyes look onward to the nearing
 strand ;
The salt winds on our cheeks blow fresh-
 eningly,
And strange sea-voices haunt the reedy
 land.

I know not where thy footsteps fall, nor yet
 What skies o'erarch thee, but I know full
 well
That thy face, like my own, is seaward set,
 Drawn thither by the same resistless
 spell.

We shall not fail to stand beside the deep,
 And though our feet may falter as we go,
Still one unerring course we ever keep
 Toward that long level where the sea-
 tides flow.

An Oaten Pipe.

The evening shades are gathering cool and
sweet ;

The moving waste awaits us ; O my bride
That never wast, set sail ; our hands shall
meet

When we make harbor on the other side.

An Oaten Pipe.

Easter Morning.

THREE days the barrowed earth had swept
Across the star-sown gulfs of space,
Since she beside that grave had wept
Which hid her first-born's sinless face ;
Her heart was dark, her lamp was quenched,
Her fluttering hope untimely dead,
And night by night her sorrow drenched
The fevered pillow at her head.

Then as the dark began to wane,
And Easter morn within the skies
Its rose of promise set again,
Sleep fell upon her weary eyes ;
And as she slept a vision came ;
It smiled, and lightly clasped her hand,
And swiftly moved, on feet of flame,
Past many a strange and tropic land.

Far eastward through the gates of dawn,
By paths of pearl, 'mid golden mists,
Where strewn o'er many a dewy lawn
Burn diamonds and amethysts,

An Oaten Pipe.

Straight on into the rising day

She followed still her flying dream,
To where with festal sounds alway
The springs of glory downward stream ;

Where throb the songs that never cease,

Where dip the laurel and the palm,

Where lilies of eternal peace

Breathe airs that blow from hills of balm ;

Where garmented in praise One stands

Than light more radiantly fair,

And, joy of joys ! Whose piercé hands

Lie on her darling's shining hair.

O mother-love ! O pure delight !

O eyes that brim with blissful tears !

Behind her dies the barren night,

Behind her sink the widowed years ;

She listened, and a dear Voice spake :

“ Be comforted, thou stricken one,

The bruised reed I ne'er will break ”—

She woke, and saw the Easter sun.

An Oaten Pipe.

The Milk-maid.

HER ankles brush the dew-wet grass ;
The birds are blithe to see her pass ;
Along the daisies, golden-bright,
Run little shivers of delight.
Her shining pail swings on her arm ;
Within her hair the sun lies warm ;
No cloud is in the morning skies ;
No shadow veils her April eyes ;
Songs gurgle from her heart and lips,
As o'er the field she lightly trips,
To where beside the smooth-worn gate
Her swollen-uddered cattle wait.
Yet ere her task she shall essay,
She will not start and turn away
If suddenly her cheek be pressed
To happy Colin's lusty breast,
The while upon her tender mouth
He slakes love's oft-recurring drouth.
Ah, who would not gray wisdom miss,
To feel again the velvet kiss
That thrilled the lyric heart of yore ?
Who—who would not be young once more ?

An Oaten Pipe.

At Sunset.

NOT now, not now, not of this veiled sun
Nor tenuous shade, our tremulous love
was born,
But when the sheer night feathered to-
ward the morn,
And the faint stars, like tapers, one by one
Died in the dawn, and the chill night was
done.
'Twas when the light wind o'er the breath-
ing corn
Winnowed his vans, and from each gossa-
mered thorn
Billowed the dew-pearled gonfalons day
had won.
Then had our love its birth—a fluttering
thing,
That scarce knew if the fire-fledged morn
had come,

An Oaten Pipe.

Or if to swell its moon-white throat and
sing,

Or bid, 'mid twilight leaves, its voice be
dumb.

But now day wanes—Dear, doth desire take
wing?

Doth the grasshopper e'en grow burden-
some?



An Oaten Pipe.

In the Cloister.

How wearily the day goes by !

The hateful shadows on the wall
Hour after hour unmoving lie ;
Outside, I hear the sparrows call.

The garden walks, white in the glare,
Throb like a pulse beneath the heat ;
I see the sun-dial blindly stare ;
I count the fountain's steady beat.

Along their beds the flowers droop ;
All wilted is the trellised vine ;
The branches of the ash-tree stoop
With dusty berries red as wine.

The fly sings in the leaded panes ;
And from the echoing chapel steal
The livelong day the distant strains
Of hymn and chant and organ-peal.

An Oaten Pipe.

I'm tired of the rustling swish
Of trailing robes o'er chilly stones ;
I wish—what is it that I wish ?
I know a crypt where mouldy bones

Are piled against the vaulted roof ;
There a low taper ever smokes ;
The jangling bell sounds far aloof,
And muffles its unceasing strokes.

There—there are silence, gloom and rest ;
No measured step, no solemn air,
No meek cross o'er a rebel breast,
No downcast eyes, no muttered prayer.

Outside, the blinking waters lie ;
Beyond, the great world swings and roars,
Where many an infant's tender cry
Leaps forth from happy human doors.

O flesh, vex not my faltering soul,
Nor let my fancy, wandering wide
From crucifix and saintly stole,
Defile the Bridegroom's virgin bride.

An Oaten Pipe.

Bride?—ah, I hate this loathsome cell !
I hate yon altar where I kneel,
While still with mumbling lips I tell
The prayers my heart can never feel.

Bride?—still I think on perfumed aisles,
On arching boughs, on grass that springs
By streams that keep their morning smiles,
Where swallows dip their glancing wings ;

Where whispers stir the scented dark
Of screening leaves, and where the place
Grows sweet with violet eyes that mark
The truth and beauty in his face.

His face—whose face ? My hair is wet
With fevered drops ; my hands are weak ;
I know the signal that is set
In crimson on my hollow cheek.

And Sister Agnes, with the eyes
Like doves' eyes, comes to softly weep ;
Upon my brow her cool hand lies ;
I close my lids and feign to sleep.

An Oaten Pipe.

For I would be alone to dream ;
I love my dreams ; thus I escape
These maddening walls that ever gleam,
Those sickened blooms, that yellowing
grape.

The sluggard moments come and pass ;
The flickering light fades from the sill ;
I hear the sounds of evening mass,
Of closing doors, and all is still.

And o'er the ash-tree hangs a star
That trembles through the twilight gray ;
'Tis night ; a watch-dog bays afar ;
Dear God, send not another day !



An Oaten Pipe.

The Dividing of the Ways.

O ANGUISH of parting!—here swerve the
ways,

This path to the right, and that to the
left;

We are come at length to our day of days,
To our moment of moments, and are be-
reft.

Even so—I will hold your hand for a space,
Look once again in your truth-clear eyes,
Read over the lines of your patient face,
That my soul may yet hold you picture-
wise.

Shall we say it is best that it should be so?

Were Fate not loth, and had we met
While the hills were washed with the
morning-glow,

And all the valleys with balm were wet,
We had found our life, then, you and I,
Laid hands on the full warm pulse of the
years,

An Oaten Pipe.

Had drained the chalice of blessings dry,
Nor e'er set lip to this cruse of tears.

Still, who shall deny that this bitter hour,
As a blind seed sown in the womb of
Time,

May bear not yet its consummate flower
In another sphere and another clime?
Who knows that our loss is not rarer gain?
That ever like fools we choose the less?
That the core of joy is swathed in pain,
And peace in uttermost weariness?

The sun drops low, and the twilight falls;
The mist hangs over the moaning burn
Like a frosty breath; a late bird calls,
And above the wood the young stars
yearn.

Must it be farewell?—yea, it must be so,
And we shall fare well, despite grief's
threat,

For still, wherever our feet may go,
Our brows towards the self-same goal are
set.

An Oaten Pipe.

Sappho.

WHERE is that bay-crowned head supreme
in song?

The tides that darkle round the Leuca-
dian steep

Lap her forever into deeper sleep ;
About her heart of fire the cool waves long
Like cerements have been wound, and
voices strong

Of winds and waters o'er her pillow keep
Their boisterous lullaby. That frenzied
leap

From the hoar height, when sense of sharp-
est wrong

Ran in her blood like flame—the fears that
strove

Within her stormy soul—the lyric tongue

An Oaten Pipe.

Whose last high music rang through realms
of love,

Till hushed by that sea-weird which o'er
her flung

Its sudden doom,—ah, all the dole thereof

No equal tears have wept, no lips have
sung.



An Oaten Pipe.

After a Fragment of Sappho's.

SOFTLY, passer, softly tread,
Here lies Timas who is dead ;
Ere her bridal robe was made,
For the tomb she was arrayed.
When she died, with tender care
All the virgins dressed their hair,
Reaping from each lovely head
Curls for strewments o'er her bed.



An Oaten Pipe.

A City Thoroughfare.

THE flags are hot beneath my feet,
And up and down the roaring street,
'Twixt blazing fronts of brick and stone,
No gracious breath of air is blown.
I hear a wheezy violin
Above the vast unceasing din,
Where at the corner, with bare head,
A beggar sits blind as the dead.
There creeps misshapen, pale and lean,
A cripple, in whose hands is seen
A banner whoso runs may read,
That "Levy never fails to lead
In clothing and in shoes." Now loud
Above the turmoil of the crowd,
Straight through the city's throbbing heart,
'Mid knots of vans that swiftly part,
Its harsh gong pealing warningly,
An ambulance goes dashing by.

An Oaten Pipe.

A newsboy shrieks and flaunts his wares ;
A truckman on the car-track swears
And turns aside his ponderous dray,
As the bell clangs to clear the way.
There Beauty sweeps by Squalor's side ;
There Vice and Fashion proudly ride ;
There still within his gilded gates
Sits Dives, while gaunt Lazarus waits
Outside, with dull and weary eye,
For some kind soul to come and buy
His shoestrings or his pins.

And yet,

I know a bank where ferns are wet
With morning balm, where mosses grow,
And 'mid lush sedges softly flow
The netted currents of a stream
Snared in its own melodious dream.
There glance brave wings ; there many a
 sound
Of silver bugles lightly wound
Steals sweetly through the haunted shade
Of grassy isle and bosky glade.
And there lives faith in all things good ;
There whispers stir the solitude

An Oaten Pipe.

Like prayers ; and there again grow bright
The spirits that were clogged with night.
There Care her haggard mask lays by
To let young Hope smile in her eye,
While every breeze from perfumed fields
To Grief a sure nepenthe yields.
There let me haste, there let me bide,
Drenched with the opulent summer-tide.



An Oaten Pipe.

Percunt et Imputantur.

FROM sun to sun, on silence-saddled feet
The Hours go by, and on each nunlike
face

Who will may catch a smile than dawn
more sweet,

Or, leaden-eyed, may miss its fleeting
grace.

Within her hands each bears a goodly gift,
And while she neither proffers nor with-
holds,

She tarries not to urge upon unthrift
The precious things she yields to earnest
souls.

Not one returns ; no backward look is cast ;
Once gone, nor call nor prayer can reach
them more,

Clasped round with shadows of the vanished
past,

Housed in the dim, cloud-mantled gates
of yore.

An Oaten Pipe.

On Judah's Hills.

ON Judah's hills the shadows lie ;
Heaven's frosty diadem
Of clustered stars is burning high
O'er sleeping Bethlehem.

Lo, countless wings flash on the night,
And hark ! celestial strains
Pour down the glory-circled height,
O'er all the slumbering plains.

Sing, sing, ye white-robed heralds, sing !
In yonder narrow shed,
Straw-pillowed lies your Lord and King
Upon his lowly bed.

Moriah, lift thy radiant crest ;
O Judah, be not dumb !
Messiah nestles on thy breast,
The Prince of Peace hath come.

An Oaten Pipe.

Content.

A BREATH of flowers, a flawless sky,
And tipsy bees carousing nigh ;
A vine o'erhead that weaves its screen
Of flickering shadows cool and green ;
A muffled, silver-tinkling bell
Where nibbling sheep climb yonder dell ;
A sinuous stream that laughs and bubbles
And sings amid its foamy troubles ;
A hush of hours that softly steep
The conscious world in fumes of sleep—
Ah, these no anxious thoughts shall give ;
To-day it is enough to live.



An Oaten Pipe.

A Protest.

WHAT!—old? Not so! Who says we're
old?

Our life still keeps its morning gold;
The dew still shines upon the grass
Where'er our eager footsteps pass.
Young Hope before us waves his wings,
Lifts up his voice and bravely sings,
While ambushed Joys, with twinkling eyes,
Betray us into sweet surprise.
No, we're not old; the lying years
Have whispered falsehoods in our ears;
We still are young, and still we keep
Our youth's fine wisdom, calm and deep—
That wisdom which still holds in fee
Faith in our own humanity,
And faith in God who veils His face,
But whose large language still we trace

An Oaten Pipe.

In blooms below and stars above,
Whose burden was and still is—love.
Old? Fie! Go to! Let Gaffer Time
On other's temples sow his rime,
But howe'er wags his churlish tongue,
Our own hearts tell us we are young.

An Oaten Pipe.

Her Coming.

THE DAWN.

Now moves the night before me, and the
mist
Slips from the valley, by the south-wind
kissed.

THE MEADOW.

Soon will her light feet o'er my bosom pass,
And daisies star her foot-prints in the
grass.

THE BROOK.

And I shall see her smile, as her sweet face
Lingers above me for a little space.

THE BIRD.

My blithest notes I'll flute into her ear,
And her dear spirit shall lean out to hear.

An Oaten Pipe.

THE ROSE.

My petals she shall touch with her soft lips,
While maiden joy thrills to her finger-tips.

THE LOVER.

O Love, I wait and watch the new day
break ;
The dews are drying, and the winds awake ;
Thou art my morning ; let thy sovran light
Strike on my soul and scatter all my night.

An Oaten Pipe.

The Gypsy Queen.

I know her where she goes in crimson hood,
And motley robe that sets the leaves
astir ;

Her truant hair, strayed from its silken
snood,

The frost has lightly tipped with minever.

The gypsy blood glows in her sun-browned
cheek ;

Her rounded arms with liberal fruits are
heaped ;

Her wine-dark eyes, athwart the shifting
reek

Of burning weeds, behold the fields new-
reaped.

Too brief the days of her mild empery,

Yet such the ample largess of her grace
That in the wintry heart of memory

Shall still abide the sunshine of her face.

An Oaten Pipe.

After the Feast.

THE music dies, and one by one the guests
Rise and depart ; the merriment is done ;
Hushed are the mingled voices, songs and
jests ;

From the spent glass the noiseless sands
are run.

Into the dark the feasters turn and go,
Some with brave smiles, and some with
heavy eyes ;

The drooping flowers are pale, the lights
burn low,

And silence on the empty chambers lies.
The last " good-night " is said ; closed is the
door ;

Then slowly, down the blossom-littered
floor,

The weary master casts a wistful eye,
Peopling the gloom with ghostly company.

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